

West Hartford Clean Energy Task Force – Minutes

Date March 12, 2014
Time 7:00 PM
Location Rm 422 – Town Hall

Attendance:

Catherine Diviney
Dave Mello (new)
George Porter
Jeff Huang
Joe Campanella
Max DuBuisson
Judy Allen
Chris Nelson
Susan Begin
Mike Sullivan
Bernie Pelletier

- Sagewell campaign progress
 - Mailing to be paid for by Sagewell and the contractors
 - CETF will not offer early sign up bonuses after discussion with Sagewell because it is complex to administer and may backfire
 - The letter should be ready to go out soon and will be signed by Catherine Diviney, Chris Nelson, and Mayor Slifka
 - The April 10 workshop in Town Hall Auditorium will follow the mailing.
 - The CETF plans to promote the Sagewell program at Celebrate West Hartford event – Catherine to talk to Sagewell about program end date (at least through end of June).
 - Bernie and Catherine tested and talked to Tim D'Souza (Sagewell) about website improvements. Sagewell made some changes. Task Force members volunteered to test website before campaign starts.
- \$15 CEC Bright Ideas Grant will be used primarily on street lighting with some money held in reserve to support Celebrate West Hartford and signage for the street light demos.
 - The street light demo will be situated in high foot traffic areas so the public can see these pilots in action. Two locations are proposed – 1) the intersection of Farmington and Main Street and 2) Park Road.
 - Signs will explain the pilot to passersby.
 - The pilot will involve testing GE, Phillips, and Cree LED streetlights
 - Project still needs to be submitted and accepted by CEC before funding approved.

- Next meeting task force may want to start planning for Celebrate and thinking about which vendors, working on new promotional materials, handouts, etc.
- Other items
 - Catherine reviewed the progress on the Performance Contracting effort. The Town is in process of interviewing and hiring an “Owner Representatives” to review project scope, calculations, and contracts, and make sure that the work will perform as promised. The effort is moving forward and it is expected that the town will receive \$9 million dollars of upgrades that will be cash neutral to the town after consideration of energy savings and rebates. The work is forecast to reduce energy costs 15% - or about \$600,000.
 - Catherine discussed the Charter Oak school plans. The building is still expected to be LEED gold.
 - Catherine and Joe reaffirmed that the developer of the new hotel is required to build to LEED gold standards.
 - While building to this standard MAY (not necessarily) be more costly it is expected that on balance it will be a net positive to the town and to the owner.
 - Chris Nelson indicated that as a LEED gold building it make be able to attract clients and he shared a state website of other LEED gold buildings
 - There is some concern that the hotel is moving forward quickly without consideration (yet) of the required standards and that this haste may result in lost opportunities.
 - The CETF agreed to approach David Gabriele about some aspects of the town’s new initiative to increase diversion of material from Trash to Recycling. There was also discussion of a desire on the part of the Town Council to create a Waste Management Plan for special development areas.
 - Two Power of Change award applications were submitted for the WHPS Energy Quiz and the Noah Webster Library boiler replacement / hot water conversion which is generating 60% natural gas savings.
 - Bernie Pelletier updated the group on Connecticut’s energy plan “Cleaner, Cheaper, and more Reliable”. The group discussed the strain that this winter, the retirement of some power plants, and increased conversion to natural gas have put on the supply of natural gas in New England. There was recognition that excess adoption of natural gas before the supply network is built out enough – may be a dangerous – if well intentioned initiative.
- Meeting was adjourned and the Sagewell subcommittee put the final touches on the letter.